GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WATER RESOURCES
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:111
ANSWERED ON:15.07.2002
SURVEY ON RAINFALL
MADAN PRASAD JAISWAL

Will the Minister of WATER RESOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have conducted any survey of rainfall in the agriculture sector and also to do away with dependence of this sector on rain for irrigation;

(b) if so, the outcome thereof; and

(c) the follow-up action taken by the Government thereon ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF WATER RESOURCES (SMT. BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY)

(a) to (c) India Meteorological Department of Government of India regularly monitors the rainfall in the country which is assessed on the basis of 35 hydro-meteorological sub-divisions. At the time of independence only about 17% of cultivated area of the country was irrigated and the rest of the 83% cultivated area depended on the rainfall.

In order to avoid dependence of agriculture on rainfall, an irrigation potential of 99.76 million hectare (provisional) have been created by the end of the Ninth Five Year Plan (1997-2002) and irrigation facilities have been provided to 57.03 million hectare (provisional) by the year 1998-99, which constitutes about 40% of the cultivated area. This has been possible through the development of water resources by means of major, medium and minor irrigation projects. As per the latest assessment made by Central Water Commission, with the 1132 Billion Cubic Metre (BCM) of utilizable water resources in the country, an irrigation potential of 139.9 million hectare can be ultimately created. Storage of 177 BCM has already been created to meet the water requirement during the lean seasons and another 207 BCM storage is likely to be created with the completion of projects which are under construction or in planning stages. In order to accelerate the accrual of benefits from the ongoing irrigation projects, Government of India launched the Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (AIBP) in 1996-97 by providing Central Loan Assistance (CLA) to the States in order to supplement their resource requirement and enable them to complete identified ongoing major & medium irrigation projects in advance stages of construction. Under the programme, Rs. 8480.03 crore of CLA has already been released by the end of March 2002. The programme has been further re-oriented to provide 100% loan assistance to those identified major & medium projects in the advance stage, which can be completed in one year (two working seasons) under the Fast Track Programme with effect from February 2002.

In order to save the agriculture in rainfed areas, from the vagaries of monsoon, Government of India started National Watershed Development Project for Rainfed Areas (NWDPRA) in 1990- 91 with the objectives of enhancement of agriculture productivity in such areas. An area of 22.16 lakh hectare has been treated upto 2000-01 during the Ninth Five Year Plan period.